



## MARINES EXPAND ASSISTANCE TO JAPAN



Marines and Sailors from III Marine Expeditionary Force expanded humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations in Japan today as part of Operation Tomodachi (Friends). Marines deployed from Yamagata Airport and Camp Sendai to survey disaster-stricken areas and distribute supplies. The Forward Area Refueling Point established by Marines from 1st Marine Aircraft Wing at Yamagata Airport has greatly increased military aircraft capabilities by locating vital fuel

resources at forward locations. Two KC-130J aircraft from Marine Air Group 36 departed from Marine Corps Air Station Futenma today. The aircraft were carrying personnel from III MEF, along with communications equipment, and other gear to be delivered on mainland Japan to areas needing support. Currently, there are approximately 554 Marines, Sailors, and Civilians from III MEF and Marine Corps Bases Japan deployed in support of Operation Tomodachi. Marine KC-130J aircraft have flown 98 sorties to-date in support of Operation Tomodachi. For more stories, photos, videos and information about the ongoing humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations being conducted by III MEF, please follow them on: [Facebook](#), [Flickr](#) and [Marines.mil](#).

## EXPEDITIONARY FORCE ARRIVES



The 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit and Amphibious Squadron 11, with a combined total of more than 4,000 Marines and Sailors, arrived off the coast of northern Japan this morning. Helicopters are flying a six-man forward command element of the 31st MEU to Matsushima, Japan, in order to coordinate initial efforts for disaster aid planning with officials already on scene. Two members of the MEU are in Yokota coordinating efforts to provide relief. The amphibious dock

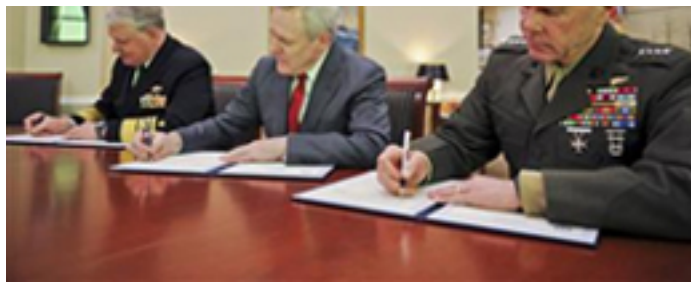
landing ship USS Harpers Ferry (LSD 49) will dock pier-side in the port of Akita later in the day in order to prepare for the initial offload disaster relief equipment and personnel. The USS Essex (LHD 2) and USS Germantown (LSD 42) remain operating at sea nearby in order to be available for offload and disaster assistance if directed. "If approved for operations, the 31st MEU is ready to rapidly send vehicles and aircraft east toward the affected areas," said Lt. Col. Michael Monti, operations officer, 31st MEU. "We can move water production capabilities to areas where there are water shortages, heavy equipment for debris removal, medical personnel to treat the wounded, and many other capabilities to help those in dire need." The MEU can also provide extensive distribution services by ground and air with its complement of more than 150 vehicles and 20 aircraft, according to Maj. Don Shove, assistant operations officer, 31st MEU. For more information about the deployment of the 31st MEU, follow them on: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Marines.mil](#).

## NEWS

### TACTICAL AIRCRAFT INTEGRATION MEMO SIGNED



Gen. James Amos, Commandant of the Marine Corps, signed a memorandum of understanding on tactical aircraft integration Monday. The memorandum, signed also by the Secretary of the Navy



Ray Mabus and Chief of Navy Operations Admiral Gary Roughead, incorporates a plan to provide five Marine Corps F-35C squadrons to the Navys carrier air wing. The F-35C operates from the Navy's large carriers via catapult launch and arrested recovery. Today, with 11 carriers and 11 large-deck amphibious ships, the U.S.

has 22 premier ships flying tactical fixed-wing aircraft missions from them. The goal is to have F-35Cs on board 11 aircraft carriers and F-35Bs (short take off vertical landing version similar to the Marine Harriers) flying off of 11 large-deck amphibious ships, giving the country, for the very first time, 22 premier ships with stealth aircraft mission capabilities.

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## FORCE STRUCTURE REVIEW RELEASED



The future Marine Corps will be smaller, but designed to serve as a "crisis response force," according to the newly released report by the 2010 Force Structure Review Group. Made up of 100 officers and senior civilian officials, the group met between September and January to outline recommendations for the Corps as it shifts away from the prolonged conflicts of Afghanistan and Iraq.

The plan calls for a reduction of the active-duty force from 202,000 to 186,800. The drawdown start-time will be dictated by the fight in Afghanistan, Marine officials have said. Key reductions include a 13 percent drop in ground combat forces, including an 11 percent reduction in infantry, 20 percent reduction in cannon artillery and a 20 percent reduction in armor; a 16 percent drop in fixed-wing tactical aviation squadrons; a nine percent drop in logistics; a seven percent drop in Marines assigned to non-operational billets; and a 12 percent drop in the civilian work force.

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Summary above provided by the Marine Corps Times.

## AFGHANS: MARINES ARE NOT HUMAN



"Marines do not bleed. They do not eat, they do not sleep. They are not



human." Afghan citizens voiced these words in December after watching Marines with Combat Logistics Battalion 3, 2nd Marine Logistics Group (Forward) conduct a route repair operation for three consecutive days near Durzay, a rural community in Afghanistan's Helmand province. Until recently, certain communities throughout southwestern Afghanistan have not witnessed coalition operations. While conducting military operations in Afghanistan, coalition

forces instruct their personnel to maintain a personable and professional relationship with the Afghan community. Since beginning operations in Afghanistan nearly 10 years ago, coalition personnel established themselves as a security force determined to eradicate the Taliban and rebuild the nation's infrastructure. "Once the Marines showed up, Taliban activity in my village ceased," said Khliq Daad, a 57-year-old resident of the area. "The Taliban here were preventing construction and rehabilitation of this area. When the Marines first showed up, they were only fighting to bring us peace. But now I see them conducting many projects and my village is much more secure. I want this knowledge to spread throughout Afghanistan the knowledge of the good things Marines are doing for this country. Without this knowledge, those who are not educated will continue to make bad choices." Daad believes coalition forces will continue to find success in his country if they continue to influence those who may perceive them as inhuman. "Marines do bleed," Daad continued. "They have bled for us, for this country and for each other."

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## LEADERS WEIGH IN TO SET EXAMPLE



All Marines are expected to maintain the Marine Corps height and weight standards. A large component of operational readiness is the physical fitness of the individual Marines, explained Lt. Gen. Kenneth J. Glueck Jr., the commanding general of III Marine Expeditionary Force and Marine Corps Bases Japan. To validate that his Marines are ready, Glueck recently called for a weigh-in of all III MEF and MCBJ Marines. "The Commandant of the Marine Corps directed that commands focus their attention on compliance with



Marine Corps height and weight standards, and that is what III MEF and MCBJ are doing," Glueck said. Leading from the front, Glueck and Sgt. Maj. Daniel J. Fierle, the MEF's sergeant major, along with several III MEF field grade officers, weighed in at Camp Courtney March 4. "We just wanted to show the Marines that we're not going to ask them to do anything we're not going to be doing," said Fierle. "By doing this openly, we are setting

the example." "This is all about being a basic Marine," Glueck said.

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[See also: Marine Corps leaders stress the importance of physical fitness >>](#)

## BIOMETRICS BECOMES NEXT BATTLEFIELD



Terrorists concealed within a civilian population are a prevalent enemy of Operation Enduring Freedom. Veiled behind a cloak of anonymity, they strike and then recede back into the shadows disappearing once more into the local populace. Putting down the typical weapons of an insurgent and picking up the staff of a shepherd or tools of a carpenter may temporarily disguise a hostile person but it will not deceive trained eyes for long, said a forensics expert at the Central Training Area. "The people we are dealing with right now are not wearing distinctive uniforms, and we need to identify them somehow,"

said Tim Seguin, a latent print examiner and Forensic Material Collection and Exploitation Course instructor. "We are identifying them by biometrics. Biometrics are the unique biological traits, such as fingerprints or DNA, used to identify individuals," Seguin said. Members of Military Police Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 37, 3rd Marine Logistics Group, III Marine Expeditionary Force, and Army soldiers from 441st Military Intelligence Battalion, 500th Military Intelligence Brigade, Intelligence and Security Command, participated in training March 8 designed to teach them to capture and document biometric data at tactical sites in a forward operating environment.

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## MARINE RECEIVES PENTATHLON AWARD

Capt. Jon Disbro and more than 150 other wounded, ill and injured athletes participated in "Marine Corps Trials," a competitive sport setting that provides a forum for the Wounded Warrior Regiment to select 50 athletes as members of the All-Marine Warrior Games team. While on his second tour to Iraq, Disbro and his unit were protecting a power plant in Iskandariyah, when a round landed on their position and pieces of shrapnel tore through Disbro's right ankle. After six months and numerous surgeries,



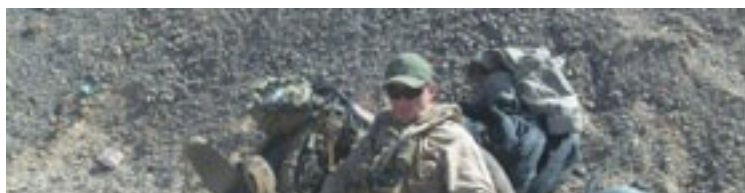
he and his medical team decided his foot was too damaged to save; Disbro chose to receive a right transtibial (lower leg amputation). Regaining his ability to walk, run, jump and swim has not been an easy undertaking. But since being injured, Disbro has been training fiercely. At last year's Warrior Games, Disbro brought home the gold in the 1,500-meter dash. He participated in the Ultimate Champion category, a pentathlon style event which consisted of five events: 50 meter freestyle swim, 10 meter air rifle shooting, 100 meter run, 1500 meter run, and shot put. Disbro successfully placed first in the 10m air rifle prone, first in cycling, first in shout put, second in the 100m sprint and 5th in the 50m freestyle swim. Disbro doesn't want to stop there. At the 2011 Warrior Games in May, Disbro and 49 other Marine athletes will go head to head with service members from Army, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard. Disbro will compete for his chance to be named the "Ultimate Champion."

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[See Also: Marines Double - Time in Afghanistan >>](#)

## HEROES OF THE WEEK

### A SHAGGY MARINE STORY



Boy meets dog. Boy trains dog. Boy loves dog. Boy and dog are blown up detecting IEDs in Afghanistan. Boy maimed. Dog dies. Boy, tenacious, vows to heal, and meet and train more



dogs. In a recent article written by the chief military correspondent for Men's Health, Bob Drury explains how he came to be sharing a booth in a South Jersey diner with 22-year-old Marine Cpl. Al Brenner and his beautiful wife Megan, listening to his incredible tale

of survival. ... It was not hard to mistake Cpl. Brenner when he walked into the hash house and removed his coat. He was wearing a short-sleeved shirt, and beneath a thick matting of black hair his forearms and hands were horribly misshapen and scarred. Medics and doctors at, first, Bagram Air Base north of Kabul and, later, at the Bethesda National Naval Hospital, had managed to sew up and save his mangled right leg and treat the burns that covered most of his torso. They had also re-built his shattered right arm using flesh, muscles, tissue, arteries, and veins grafted from his left. ("I'm young enough so the good arm will regenerate itself," he says with a wry smile.) He was also missing the pinkie on his left hand. But the most amazing wounds he tells me about are the several dozen microscopic pebbles and grains of dirt and sand still embedded in his eyeballs.

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## 2011 MARINE CORPS MILITARY CHILD OF THE YEAR



In 2010, Taylor's stepfather was on his fifth deployment to Iraq. Soon after he left, Taylor's baby brother was born. The doctor dropped the tiny infant at birth, resulting in a host of medical problems, including internal bleeding and a broken leg. When mother and baby arrived home from the hospital, the house was flooded. They had no family nearby to help. Taylor's mom did not want to even tell her husband about the difficulties for fear of upsetting him during the deployment. Taylor stepped in and helped her mother manage the clean-up of the house and the baby's medical care. When her stepfather returned home from the war months later, he was injured. During past deployments, he had been shot and suffered improvised explosive device (IED) blasts. On this trip, he took the brunt of several IED blasts and took shrapnel in his face. He returned home with a traumatic brain injury. He had memory problems

and other difficulties. He spent much of the next year in and out of the hospital. Again, Taylor stepped in to care for her family. In addition, Taylor and her mother decided they wanted to help other military spouses who found themselves in the same difficult situations. Her mother and stepfather created the non-profit called the North Star Group, and Taylor has

helped with all the events and activities to fulfill its mission. They host baby showers on base and provide pampering for pregnant spouses whose husbands are deployed.

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[See also: Connecting with the Next Generation >>](#)

## I MEF HQ GROUP RETURNS AFTER YEAR IN AFGHANISTAN



The last group of Marines and sailors with I Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters Group returned to Camp Pendleton after a year-long deployment to Afghanistan on March 10. More than one hundred family, friends and anxiously awaited their loved ones return. While deployed, I MHG provided administrative, training, and logistical support to the I Marine Expeditionary Force (FWD) command element. I MHG Marines took a base that initially fed, housed and equipped more than 10,000 Marines, and built it

up to handle the troop surge of an additional 10,000 Marines and sailors into Afghanistan. Col. Lori Reynolds, commanding officer of I MHG, is also credited for being the first female Marine to command battlespace. For the homecoming, the Southern California Patriot Guard motorcycle riders accompanied the arriving buses, which added to the festive atmosphere. Joseph Lynch, a Vietnam Veteran boasting military service dating back to 1948, was impressed at how the Marines were welcomed home. "This is amazing," said Lynch, father of Master Sgt. Mark Lynch, the I MHG armory chief. "Nobody welcomed us back, but this is a real party!" The I MHG family readiness office organized the welcome party for the nearly 250 Marines and sailors. "It's nice to know that as a family member, we are part of this brotherhood that the Marine Corps has," Roberta Aenly said, mother of Col. Lori Reynolds, commanding officer of I MHG.

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## EVENTS

# YUMA AIR SHOW



The 49th Annual Marine Corps Air Station Yuma Air Show & Open House will be conducted on March 26, 2011. The theme of this event is "Celebrating the Centennial of Naval Aviation." Aerial performances will focus on demonstrating the most modern military aviation capabilities, along with showcasing a host of vintage military aircraft representative of the last 100

years of Naval Aviation. The headlining act will be a complete demonstration of the Marine Corps' "Marine Air Ground Task Force" or "MAGTAF" capabilities, which will highlight the air/ground team's current-day war fighting capability. The event will also host numerous static displays of various military aircraft and equipment, and a large variety of civilian aircraft displays as well.

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**See also: [Marine Corps Aviation Association >>](#)**

## EVENING PARADE RESERVATIONS



Every summer, "The President's Own" participates in the Marine Barracks' Evening Parade, one of the Marine Corps' oldest traditions celebrating its pride and esprit de corps. Beginning at 8:45 p.m. every Friday from May through August, the free parades last one hour and fifteen minutes and include a performance of music and precision marching featuring the Marine Band, "The Commandant's Own," The United States Marine Drum and Bugle Corps, the Marine Corps Color Guard, the Marine Corps Silent Drill Platoon, Ceremonial Marchers, and Corporal Chesty XIII, the official mascot of Marine Barracks Washington. Please note that there is no

Evening Parade on Friday, July 1. Instead, the parade for that week will take place on Thursday, June 30. For reservations and more information, visit the [parade reservation page](#) or call (202) 433-6060.